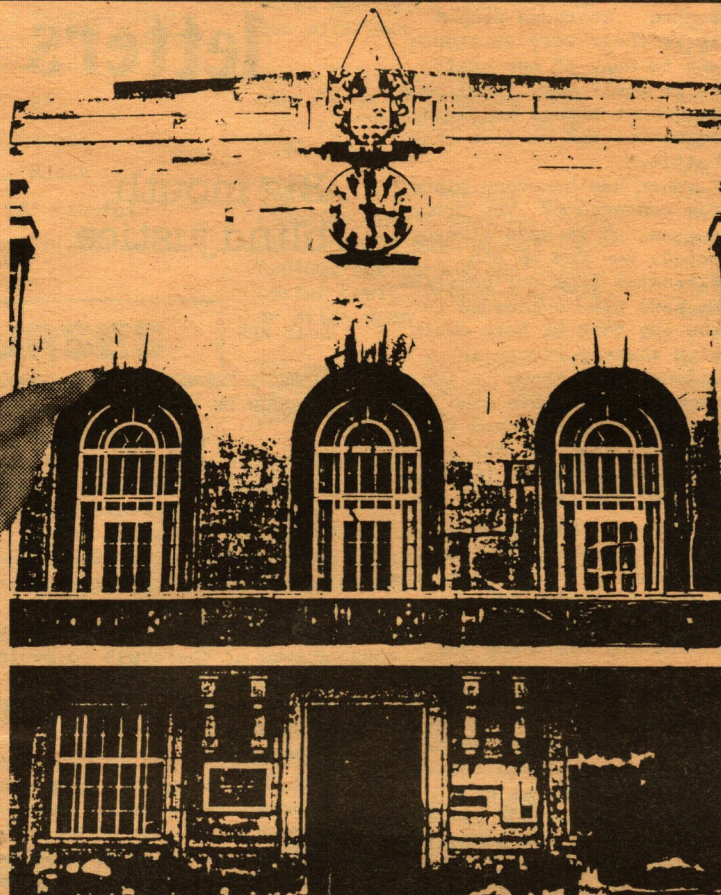


HACKNEY PEOPLE'S PRESS

Hackney's **OTHER** Newspaper

Jenkin does a Macgregor



HERE WE GO!

There will be no deal between Hackney and the Government. That was the message from the Council after the leaders of 26 threatened councils met the Secretary of State for the Environment, Patrick Jenkin at the beginning of February.

The stage is now set for confrontation when Councils across the country meet to set their budgets on the same day, Thursday 7 March. Although Hackney Council is formally committed to setting a deficit budget for next year, it is expected that they will join the other Councils in refusing to set a rate.

The final decision on which tactic to go for (both are illegal and would mean confrontation with the Government) will be made at a Labour group meeting on 25 February. An all day conference has been called for the Saturday before this crucial meeting, on 23 February, when the people of Hackney are being asked to put their views.

The Government is trying to slash the Council's spending next year by nearly a third. That's on top of the £30 million they have already stolen from Hackney since 1979. The Council budget for 1985-6 is £120 million. The Government says that it should be just £83 million. Figures like these are so ridiculous that it is almost impossible to judge what their effects would be. But it would

certainly mean that local services would be completely destroyed and that thousands of workers would be sacked.

The Town Hall unions will fight alongside the Council if they decide not to set a rate, Tommy Douras of the Joint Shop Stewards Committee told HPP. "And if the Council backs out, we'll fight on with the community groups and tenants associations," he said.

NO OPTION

The Council looks as though it is going to make a stand. Although it is possible that some councillors will not want to vote for refusing to make a rate, which is illegal, they are left with little option. "What will they do?" Council deputy leader Andrew Puddephat said to HPP. "Who is going to vote for a £30 million cut in services and put thousands on the dole? Who would want to go down in history as the person who butchered the borough's services?"

There has not been a rush of resignations following that of Mervyn Jones who, for personal reasons, decided that he would have to stand down. A by-election is being held in Clissold Ward, which will be a test of the Council's popularity. Jones's resignation strengthened the position of those councillors willing to stand and fight, since it was clearly the signal for those

who had similar reasons to go as well.

The crucial factor which will determine whether Hackney wins or loses will be how many other councils follow us down the no-rate path. Jenkin and the Tory Government are hoping to pick off individual authorities one by one. When faced with the solidarity of 26 councils standing firm together, he says that there can be no compromise. So far, the councils have refused to show him their detailed figures for next year's budgets. If individual authorities start caving in, then cosy little deals will be struck up.

As part of the campaign to build up community support around the day on which the budget will be set, two major events have been planned.

On Saturday 2 March a motorcade procession will travel around the borough, organised by the Save Hackney Campaign.

On Thursday 7 March, the day the budget will be debated, a festival and rally will take place outside the Town Hall, with stalls, events and sideshows, as well as speeches. This is being organised by the Joint Shop Stewards Committee and will involve unions from LT and ILEA as well as those from the Town Hall.

7 March could be the most historic day in the fight for democracy in local government since the defiance of Poplar Council in the 1920s. HPP will be there to report on how the Councillors of the borough carry out their duty to the people who elected them.

Transport run down

January and February are two sorry months in the campaign to bring London a better public transport system. The fare rises early in the New Year were followed less than a month later by a major round of cuts in services and conversions of routes to OPO, one person operated, conductor-less buses. These were the direct result of the removal of LT from GLC control last year, and its takeover by a government-run body, London Regional Transport. The Secretary of State, Nicholas Ridley, is now in complete charge of London's transport system, and is imposing ridiculous demands for cost savings and staff reductions.

This has had a dire effect on public transport services in Hackney, which is particularly badly served by LRT. The tube does not run into the centre of the borough and the bus services are notoriously unreliable. Add to this the fact that only a third of households have access to a car and you see how much Hackney needs an improved public transport system. Hackney has lost one route directly, the 255, has had one route converted to OPO, the 76, and has had cuts on other routes.



HELP!

You may have experienced difficulties in trying to buy Hackney People's Press recently because this is the first issue of HPP to be printed since October/November. We're sorry, but there are not enough people left to sustain our regular 10 issues-a-year production schedule.

If factions of Euro-communists and old-guard "fundamentalists" are

wrestling for the soul of the Moring Star, why is no-one struggling to influence the editorial line of HPP?

For the paper to continue, we need more volunteers to help produce and sell the paper, and more contributors to supply news reports, stories, gossip, reviews, letters and announcements about events and activities in Hackney.

We think that Hackney, at a time when the government is carrying out its mammoth attack on "Britain's

poorest borough", more than ever needs the strong voice of an independent community newspaper.

By helping HPP, you will be helping the fightback against Thatcher. All those people already involved in the struggle can spread their message by telling HPP about it.

For details of how you can help, see "No HPP... No Comment" on the back page and come to the next editorial meeting on: WEDNESDAY 20th FEBRUARY 7.30pm, at Centerprise, 136 Kingsland High St, E8.

HPP recieved this in December:

Labour Party: Are we ready for the crunch?

Dear HPP,

The crisis, confrontation and battle much heralded, has come at last. Many of us have predicted that this would be the crunch year. Now that it is here, what is happening and how is the Council shaping up for this life or death battle? Sadly, the news is depressing.

In November the Labour Party had its long-awaited Borough Conference. The attendance was high and expectations of a clear, united stance were strongly felt. The crisis was clearly outlined to the conference and overwhelmingly the conference adopted a strategy of defiance and confrontation. This was based on a motion declaring no retreat, no reduction in jobs or services and direct confrontation with this government.

As ever, the Labour Party likes to divide itself at these crucial moments. So a debate ensued about details of tactics that were turned into principle. We are fighting one of the most cynical and determined enemies for many a year, yet we seem to want to do two things: 1) to declare exactly what stance we are going to take and 2) to spend the majority of our time and energy fighting among ourselves.

The battle centred around two options which have become known as the Deficit Budget Option and the No Rate Option. Most people privately agree that there is very little to choose between the two options. Most people privately agree that whatever road we take we will end up in an illegal situation. Yet the Party goes to divide itself and publicly declares that one of the options is more radical than the other. What is the result of this? In one short step we have alienated those trade unions which are opposed to this stance and which have adopted, in unison with other trade unions, the no rate option. It is these unions, which have a greater understanding of democracy in the Labour and trade union movement which have joined with eight other Joint Shop Stewards' Committees in London and have in a united way adopted the policy of not setting a rate.

So at the end of the conference we have the following achieved: 1) alienated a substantial section of our trade union movement and 2) left a few comrades feeling that their side has won. I remarked in a joking way afterwards that if people want to play games on a Saturday afternoon they should stick to football; it commands more popular support. It is not a time for jokes but there is a tragic feeling that for many people the whole thing is a game. People should

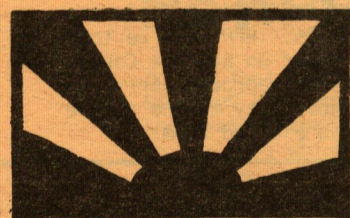
not be allowed to participate in this crucial decision about Hackney unless they have spend a morning at the Fuddleston centre for handicapped children or a day going out with the meals on wheels, gone to Lea View House and talked to the tenants whom we have rehoused there or been to a session of handicapped sport at Britannia Leisure Centre. To those people it is their very existence and to many of our staff it is their very livelihood. We cannot afford to divide ourselves and so lose this battle.

What has happened since the conference? The trade unions, as we have already noted, are fed up and alienated from our policies. We have also succeeded in the way that we have dealt with these policies in alienating a group in the community who have campaigned long and hard for Hackney, that is, the groups involved in the Save Hackney Campaign. And now because of ridiculous decisions, the Labour Group have made in relation to the co-opted members of HEMA, we have succeeded in alienating the black and ethnic minority communities. That is why the picture is so bleak: with only a few months to go before we have to take crucial and far-reaching decisions we have lost the support of the trade unions, the community organisations and the black and ethnic minority organisations. Also, not a single other Labour borough has taken the same decision as us.

We can reverse this situation. But it will take courage and leadership to achieve it. It would mean openly admitting that we may have chosen the wrong option, it will mean trying to talk to some of our supporters in the community in a non-patronising way. It will mean stating to the trade unions that we are equals in this battle and we must equally influence the tactics and policies that emerge. I am optimistic that we can achieve this but it will take a major change of heart by some.

Anthony Kendall.

Since this letter was written circumstances have changed; the Labour Group has adopted the No Rate option and reversed its policy towards HEMA. See "Here We Go!" on p1.



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letters

Big mouth, blind justice

Dear HPP

ANTHONY CONNELL vs THE LONDON BOROUGH OF HACKNEY

The above case was heard on 13 November 1984 by Judge Stuckley at Shoreditch County Court and it is the understanding of this Union that the Judge specifically deferred judgment until 14 November to enable representatives of the press to be in attendance. His judgment was published in that day's edition of the London Standard.

Whilst giving his judgement a number of vague and generalised criticisms of Hackney Borough Council were made but Judge Stuckley referred specifically to the Council being "an overstuffed bureaucracy". It is the opinion of this Branch that Judge Stuckley has made no attempt to verify the comments but merely used his position to put forward personal and highly political opinions. A press statement was released by this Branch that Judge Stuckley has made no attempt to verify the comments but merely used his position to put forward

personal and highly political opinions. A press statement was released by this Branch to the London Standard on 14 November on this basis but was not published or even referred to in their report.

This Branch is extremely concerned that a Judge should abuse his position in Court by holding back a judgement on a case in order that his political prejudices can be read out to the press for public consumption. I have written to the Lord Chancellor requesting that he conduct an investigation and take appropriate action against the Judge although a quick glance at the Clerk of the Courts records will confirm the Judge's actions.

This Branch takes a serious view of members of the Judiciary acting in a clearly unprofessional and unethical manner and I trust that you will publish this letter in order that public awareness of such scandalous conduct can be heightened.
Yours sincerely
JIM WILSON, Branch Secretary.

It's the cops who don't co-operate

Dear HPP,
Your latest issue repeats the widespread error that Hackney Council has a policy of non co-operation with the police. Although the policy of many trade union and community based organisations is non co-operation, the Council's policy is as follows:
1. We invite the police to the Police Committee. (They do not turn up.)
2. We oppose wholeheartedly "free-standing" consultative committees because these are used by the police as a

political alternative to the movement for greater accountability (and in practice the police find it easy to manipulate them).

3. We have laid down some strict guidelines for contact between Council Departments and the police (where these are clearly in the public interest).

I think you will agree that this does not add up to a policy of non-co-operation. Indeed, that is the policy that the police have towards us!
Yours sincerely,
BRYNLEY HEAVEN, Chair, Police Committee.

CP carries on raising cash for the miners

Dear HPP,
Your September edition contained a report of the harassment that our branch members are receiving when holding our open air meetings outside Brooke Road Post-Office on Saturday mornings in support of the miners' strike. We organise a collection for the miners' families during the course of these open-air meetings. I am pleased to inform your readers that despite the police attention we have raised over £1,100 (as of 8th October) for the miners families.

We intend to continue with our open-air meetings (at which collections are perfectly legal) for the duration of the dispute. We thank all those who have contributed so generously so far and look forward to their continuing support until the miners emerge victorious.
Yours sincerely,
Dermod Mc Neill, Secretary,
Rectory Branch Communist Party.

Taking wing?

All kinds of wild visions float before the eyes when contemplating the consequences of a recent demand from Alf Lomas. Alf Lomas, Hackney's Euro MP, called for a better deal for pensioners, pointing out that pensioners in Britain are only getting half as much as those in some of

the other EEC countries. He also called for free travel for pensioners throughout Europe - though it is free in some parts now, in others pensioners have to pay. Even within Britain there is no consistency.

Travelling free from one end of the EEC to the other

could certainly broaden the horizons of the elderly. Will we soon be seeing a new breed of rootless, wandering, happy elderly hippies?

International flocks of pensioners roaming all over the Continent, perhaps migrating south in the winter? Day trips to Strasbourg for the aged? London's transport jammed with Darby and Joans on sight seeing trips?

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NO UNECONOMIC PITS

The 'human cost' of pit closures, and the damage to the mining communities, are usually the terms in which the present mineworkers' strike is discussed. The debate seems to be about 'economy' vs. 'humanity'. But is the rationale behind pit closure programmes really 'economic necessity'? Ashton Hunte identifies the shifting nature of the National Coal Board's slogan 'uneconomic pits', and questions their grasp of economics.

MONETARISM

The proposed plan for the wholesale closure of coal mines under the guise of them being uneconomic is a vehicle for the perpetuation of monetarist economic theories. Coal like any other raw material adds to the total sum of a nation's wealth. It naturally follows that the demolition of a prime material will in the long run pose plenty of unsolvable problems. Closer examination reveals that the NCB argument that there are many uneconomic pits is untrue. It is therefore important to recognise their and the Government's definition of uneconomic pits: these are seen to be uneconomic by the lack of capital funding. Moreover there are practises which worsen this state of affairs. Despite the former, the more modern pits are not ripe - like all other public assets - for privatisation. It is the intention to advance the construction of more nuclear power stations to fill the energy gap.

The Board's definition is very narrow and ill-defined

and generally is an affront to common sense. For, in their own words, a pit may be deemed un-economic by their investment decisions. Furthermore, a given pit moves to and fro between being economic and uneconomic within a very short time. This is not only based on investment, but on geological and marketing factors. In short, the NCB will have the first and the last word. Furthermore, matters became even worse by the "Coal Industry Act" of 1980 which was the source of the present conflict. For in this Act, the Government's grants which are vital to the industry were to be finalised by the end of the financial year 1982-3. This naive Act allowed for the NCB's borrowing in the private sector. The infection of non-confidence by the Government would have made this borrowing impossible. Worse news followed.

95 PITS TARGETED

It later emerged that there is a target of ninety-five pits to be closed within 8 years.

This would mean job losses of 80-100,000. In November 1982 the NCB, in a matter of fact way, claimed that there were only 60 pits that would be closed. What does it mean to employment in general? Economists have proved that for every miner who loses his job, four workers in allied industries lose theirs, and the spiral continues.

MACHINERY

The engineering industries are the first to feel the effect. Manufacturers in the past supplied standard implements to the mining industry. In recent years there has been a departure from this policy. In the case of a machine breaking down, formerly parts were inter-changeable. This is not the position any longer. It takes some time for a vital part to be replaced. In the meantime production targets are not met. Bonuses which are very important to the real wage level are lost to the workers by the waiting which is unnecessary. Is it not ironic that manufacturers who make identical equipment will supply parts that are not inter-changeable? Could there be existing similarities in reference to emergency rescuing equipment? Finally, the unions of the engineering industries seem unaware that the issues affect them.

The Government, in March 1983, published in Hansard its aims and objectives to which there was to be adherence by the NCB. A 'break even' was anticipated. This was to be achieved without grants. In addition the output of deep-mined pits would be dramatically reduced, and they would be phased out by 1988. The Monopolies and Mergers Commission, apart from recommending closures, suggested reorganisation of the industry and the Board into Area Units. The stage was set for privatisation. Figures of 1982 show that coal in the UK is mined more cheaply than in Western Europe. The UK received £41 subsidy per ton while Belgium received £61. The UK is possibly the cheapest in the world except for South Africa where coal-mining is calculated by lives per ton!

DELIBERATE RUNDOWN

The NCB policy of marketing is archaic: the acquiring of markets is invariably out of step with the customers' expectation of delivery. For the NCB is at the mercy of the private contractors who can charge what they like. From the pit head to the customer the high extra cost is reflected on what it costs to mine a ton of coal. On the question of productivity, where the Board, for example,

predicts that 30,000 tons of coal is an expected target for a given pit, it will transpire that they have not allowed for the waste which is approximately 35%. Failure to achieve the set target is superficially used to argue that many pits are uneconomic.

It has been a deliberate policy to reduce coal's contribution to the electric and other industries whilst that of nuclear power is rising. In 1982 coal fell by 8.3% and nuclear energy increased by 18.4%. The false need for nuclear power is not based on an energy gap. Neither is it cheap, for all evidence points to the contrary, not to mention the present and future dangers to generations.

The technology is available for more liquefaction of coal into gas and for the production of synthetic fuel. In twenty years' time when North Sea gas is extinguished, it may be too late to rectify today's mistakes.

It becomes clearer that the Government and the NCB's definition of uneconomic pits does not agree with the necessary and the practical. Neither is the money they are prepared to spend to lay waste to important industry justified. Privatisation is for the purpose of making quick profits. The needs of the communities and the country are not taken into account. No case can be made for nuclear energy to replace the coal industry.

A VISIT TO THE PICKET LINE

At three a.m. on a very windy drizzly morning this month, four residents of Upper Clapton set off for Deal to join the Kent miners on the picket lines. We went to see for ourselves exactly what happens on a miners' picket line and to meet and talk with the men. All of us have been collecting food and money for the families and miners, but we felt that a visit to the coalfield was long overdue. We wanted to show our support by turning up to experience the picket line for ourselves, to talk and to listen. The act of going to the miners was another way of showing solidarity, just as giving a tin of beans or a pound note might be.

Breakfast

We arrived at the Miners' Club at about 5.30 a.m. Breakfast was being prepared and tables set by a small group of miners. We ate breakfast and talked with the men about the elaborate campaign mounted by the police to bus in the four scabs at Betteshanger Colliery. One of the scabs is supported by the extreme right-wing Freedom Association. The miners know that when this dispute is over, the Association will take care of this man. For the

other scabs things will be different. No miner will be prepared to work with men who strike-break. More than in any other industry, mining is based on trust and team work - miners' lives depend literally on this. The few Kent scabs will never be accepted in their community and work place again - the trust is gone for ever.

Moral support

After breakfast we travelled the short distance from the Club to the pit-head. We drove across a bleak, grey landscape made inhospitable by the driving rain. A short trip led us to the approach road to the pit. The four scabs usually arrived at 8.30-9.00 a.m. and left at about 3 p.m. and obviously only worked on the surface (for safety reasons among others), doing a spot of painting or clearing up. While waiting in the rain for their arrival, we chatted about the ways in which people can give support. It's not just food and money that the miners and their families need. They need the moral support of other workers or those unemployed, who recognise that the miners are fighting for us all. The miners also want action for from other trade unionists.

They need people to talk about their case, to explain what the strike is about, because so many people only 'know' what the Tory controlled press want them to know. One miner talked to us of his fears for the National Health Service, and how the Government have been dismantling it before our very eyes, yet telling us that the NHS is safe. A gentle, almost self-effacing man, he spoke with both sadness and anger about Thatcher's speech about the 'enemy within'. During the war he had stayed in the mine doing essential work and kept the country going, and other miners who had gone to fight Hitler had died. This man felt that if anyone was an enemy to the people of this country, it is Thatcher.

Banter

The pickets stood in the rain, passing the time talking quietly or occasionally engaging in friendly banter. On the other side of the barrier, lined along the private NCB road, stood the police. At 8.30 a.m. approached, more van-loads of police arrived. Suddenly the word went round and the men stepped forward to the barrier as a blue police van full of officers sped up the road and through the gate which had been swiftly opened by a police guard. Immediately behind came the person-

nel van which hurtled into the yard to a roar of jeers and cries of 'scab'. The surge of noise and activity was over in less than a minute. The pickets returned to their cars to head back to the club.

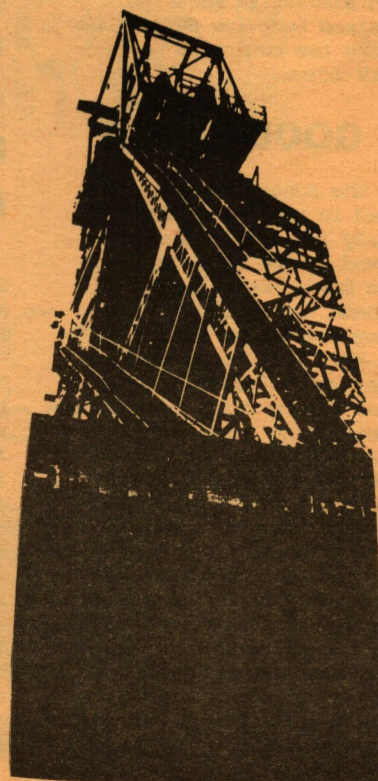
Not much in the way of violence and aggression, you may be thinking. The police allowed the men to picket, but controlled the situation by occupying NCB property and, at great expense, bussing in the scabs in such a way that no one could possibly talk with them to argue their case. The miners picket to register their protest and make their presence known. If they stepped on the road they could be arrested for trespassing or obstruction.

Arrests

They wouldn't be arrested for picketing - no miner out of the four thousand arrested so far in this dispute has been arrested for picketing. The police have always used petty offences such as obstruction, which they use when they have been told to 'sort out' a situation. It is usual for the police to arrest peace protesters for petty offences or anyone else on a march demonstrating about something Thatcher doesn't agree with. The police have never

been more obviously used for political ends than they are under this government.

We went back to the miners' club for a cup of tea and to reflect on these things. We came away with the realisation that for the miners this is an everyday occurrence which they get on with in grim determination, each day taking them nearer to victory.



Neighbourhood Watch 'increases crime rate' in poor areas

A spin off from the police scheme 'neighbourhood watch' is likely to make it particularly unpopular in Hackney: it has the effect, a programme in the 'London Programme' series found, of increasing the crime rate in the poorer areas of cities.

VOLUNTEERS

Neighbourhood watch is an American based scheme being adopted by the Met to combat crime in the capital. It relies on self-selected volunteers working for the police, patrolling certain areas. Although the scheme seems to be finding favour in the richer areas of London, it is hardly likely to be feasible in an area like Hackney. So thieves, driven away from the rich pickings, head for the poorer ones - a change apparently greeted as a success by the police.

Brynley Heaven, chair of Hackney Police Committee, agrees with the programme's findings, saying that the scheme had only managed to create divisions within the

community. What was needed was more money for housing to improve security, and more effective policing.

This news follows shortly after a meeting of London



Labour MPs with the Met police commissioner, Sir Kenneth Newman, at which they discussed the high level of crime in the capital and low level of clear-up compared with the rest of the country.

MPs also expressed their doubts about the revised structure for local police units into eight large areas. This, they think, can only work against the policy of increasing local involvement in policing.

Late night raids on the homes of innocent Turkish workers, sometimes without search warrants, curfew restrictions imposed on conditions of bail and deception methods by police are all part of normal practice now. Community workers are often denied access to those detained and are themselves checked for immigration status.

HARASSMENT

Black tenants on the Nye Bevan estate have complained of intolerable levels of police harassment, including raids on their homes without search warrants, their doors kicked down in early hours of the morning. A defence campaign has been launched for a black youth, Ricky Whittington whom faces charges of grievous, bodily harm and criminal damage after the police raided his home in the early hours of the morning.

The treatment of black prisoner Cyrus Noor, a close friend of Colin Roach, who attempted to throw a petrol bomb at Bethnal Green police station in protest at Colin's

death, is causing great concern. It exposes yet again the racism of the prison service - their response to black prisoners who pose a threat to the system ranging from segregation to dispersal, from injection with zombifying drugs to sectioning under the Mental Health Act.

This report from the bulletin of the East London Campaign against Racist Attacks and Police Harassment highlights only those attacks which have affected Hackney.



Ace Kelly - case dismissed

Ace Kelly has at last had the last charge still outstanding against him after his arrest last June dismissed.

The charge, breach of the peace, was one of four made against him when he was arrested, accused of kidnapping a two-and-a-half year old girl. With him at the time of the arrest was his daughter, aged six.

At the hearing, before magistrate Jobling at the Horseferry Magistrates Court on February 1, the seven witnesses (white, middle class) were all agreed that they had thought the child looked six or seven years old and that Ace was not swearing or inciting bystanders to violence.

The magistrate, although saying that Ace's conduct was a disgrace, dismissed the case.

Ace Kelly is now bringing charges against the police on four grounds, both on his own account and on his daughter's. She is still suffering aftereffects from the traumatic events of that day.

Wrens Park homes transformed

Phase 1 of a plan to modernise 99 flats on Hackney's Wren's Park Estate in Lower Clapton has just started and a show flat is being opened to give tenants an idea of how their homes will be transformed.

The project is being carried out with full tenant participation and is another effort by the council to rehabilitate an old estate and bring it up to a standard similar to the highly praised Lea View Estate and using the council's own work force.

GOOD VALUE

The scheme was prioritised in Hackney's budget early in 1984 and was approved by The Department of The Environment "as a scheme that will produce long term value for money."

Work will be carried out over an anticipated seven week period while tenants continue to live in the flat and Council officials are working towards minimising any inconvenience.

Lea View Estate Councillor John Chanin said: "The estate had fallen to such a state of disrepair and had got the tenants to such a low point that any ordinary approach to try and put this right would have had no effect, so together with the tenants

we sat down with the architects and came up with a modernisation strategy.

"If we don't design good security measures our tenants are going to be victims of crime and if we don't provide good insulation they will have high heating bills.

SAFETY

"So the flats are not just being designed to look nice but to make our tenants feel safe. There are more estates that we want to bring up to this standard and this is one of the reasons that we are fighting against the Government's rate-capping measures."

IMPROVEMENTS FOR MORNINGSIDE FLATS

Seven blocks of flats on Morningside Estate, Hackney E9, are being upgraded with new roofs, windows, front doors and other environmental improvements. An entry-phone system is also being installed to improve security on the estate.

Morningside is an ex-GLC estate and Hackney Council is funding the project, while using its own labour force as the GLC is unable to meet their commitment to carry out the work in this financial year. But the GLC will be paying back the money to the borough eventually.

The project will cost £2.6 million and is expected to be completed in December 1986.

Chair of Housing, Councillor John Bloom said: "The scheme is an example of Hackney and the GLC being able to work together, but because of cutbacks in the GLC's Housing Improvement Grant by the Government there will be difficult times ahead for their tenants as well as ours."

Concern over Nightingale

At its December Committee meeting, members of Nightingale Tenants' Association expressed grave concern about the deteriorating conditions on the estate. In particular, the increasing number of lettable empty properties, leading to problems with squatters; the increase in outstanding repairs, keeping highly desirable accommodation empty and causing misery to many elderly tenants; and the deteriorating environmental conditions of the estate blocks and the estate grounds. Tenants feel that they get very little from the £1 million collected annually from this estate by Hackney Council.

What particularly angers TA members is that this worsening situation is avoidable and the TA has through the Federation of Hackney Tenants' Associations and through direct representatives put forward remedies. But Hackney Council has chosen to ignore these or in some cases to oppose them

Grant for De Beauvoir

A £50,000 grant has been given to De Beauvoir Tenants' Association - thanks to advice from Hackney Council's Area Housing Officer and District Housing Office 5.

For nearly a year, Council staff in the area have been advising the Association on how to go about making the application for the Department of the Environment grant.

Work started on the St Albans Court area of the estate on January 21st, to provide badly needed parking facilities on a boarded up site which Chris Crowfoot Secretary of the De Beauvoir Tenant's Association describes as: "an eyesore which would have become a dumping ground."

She continued: "We also intend to improve the Trinity Court shopping precinct by erecting wooden pergolas, plants and seating facilities. And the

tenants have specifically asked for play facilities for under 10s, so we will be putting in a roundabout, rocking horses and other play equipment.

"We are pleased with the help so far but there is more to be done on the estate and we hope for further help from the Council to complete our plans for more improvements on the estate."

Hackney's Community Development Committee made an £8000 grant to the group under their 1984/85 budget to employ a tenant worker and office equipment.



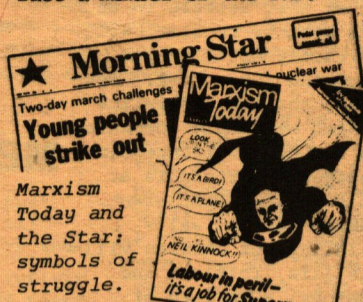
CP IN FIDDLES ROW

An internal row in the Communist Party has led to the expulsion of one of Hackney's leading political figures and the suspension of another. More people may yet be disciplined or expelled by the CP leadership as an investigation into falsification of party membership records and a battle for political leadership of the Party centres on Hackney.

So far, a Hackney Council officer, Ivan Beavis, who has been chair of the Council NALGO branch and is a member of the NALGO national executive committee, has been expelled and the sometime borough secretary and CP candidate in unopposed elections, Monty Goldman, has been suspended. The editor and deputy editor of the Morning Star have also been expelled. A further 20 members of the CP in London have been expelled, suspended or disciplined, after November's District Congress ended in uproar when the majority walked out when ordered to by the General Secretary. The row had started at the Congress after allegations had been made about the number of delegates present from some of the Hackney branches. It was said that membership-fiddling had been going on so that some branches could send more delegates than they were entitled to.

The CP national executive committee has recently published its findings in the first weekly edition of their journal Focus. It found evidence of malpractice in four branches in Hackney: Woodberry, Clapton, Redory and South Hackney. It found that "deception was being practised for political purposes in some Hackney branches... From the scale of the malpractices it is clear that it was organised deliberately." False names and

addresses had been given, some people were registered as members although they did not live in the correct area and one person listed was in fact a member of the SWP!



The row in Hackney centres on irregularities but is really a row about the CP's political direction. The majority support the Eurocommunist line, modelled on the mass parties in Europe, which advocate a "broad democratic alliance" of progressive forces, including the left of the Labour Party, the women's, gay, black and peace movements and other anti-Tory forces for social change. The traditionalist, or Stalinist wing, put the issue of class above all this, which they argue reduces the role of what has always been the CP's strongest area, the trade unions. They also give uncritical support to the Soviet bloc.

Although this tension has existed for years in the CP it has always been below the surface and behind semi-closed doors. With the "hi-jacking" of what was once thought to be the Party's newspaper, the Morning Star, and the public rows at various district congresses and the Star AGMs, it has come out into the open. The Hackney CP was one of the prides and joys of the "new forces". While the Party nationally has declined rapidly in numbers, in Hackney it has shown a modest increase over the last few years. It is the biggest borough party

in London, and makes up an eighth of the London membership.

The influence of the CP has always been disproportionately larger than would be expected from its membership. This is no less true in Hackney than anywhere else in the country and there is virtually no area of radical politics in the borough in which they do not have an input. Except, of course, on the Council. Communist Councillors have been elected in the past but over the last two decades candidates have usually been found near the bottom of the poll.

There has always been a tendency in certain sections of the Labour Party which supports the Stalinist wing of the CP. Again, Hackney is no exception to this. Most prominent in the borough is former Council leader John Kotz. The Stalinists also persuaded Ernie Roberts to run on their slate for the Morning Star management committee last year (although he was defeated). This is a particular irony since the Stalinists were responsible for driving Ernie out of the CP many years ago for his (then) alleged Trotskyist tendencies!

There are those on the left who dismiss the CP unequivocally as irrelevant. But it remains, despite its internal problems, a party with influence, organisational strength and, at least occasionally, imagination. It has taken the Labour Party years to catch up with the CP's multicultural, multi-political extravaganzas like the People's Jubilee and the Left Alive conference. The CP launched a brightly designed readable magazine years before New Socialist. A non-sectarian progressive socialist movement needs a non-sectarian progressive Communist Party.

Breaking the silence

Breaking the Silence - Writings by Asian Women. published by the Centerprise Trust and available from Centerprise.

This book is a collection of life-stories about Asian women's experiences in Britain, written in Punjabi, Gujarati, Hindi, Urdu and Bengali, with English translations alongside. As the introduction points out, the book will serve a useful educational purpose, to be used as a reader in schools, or in the teaching of English as a Second Language. However, it is far more readable in its own right than this suggests.

The best thing about it is that it is written by the Asian women themselves, without any (even Asian) interpreter. The women are of greatly different ages and backgrounds, but all share traumatic memories of coming to live in Britain. Many encountered poverty, bad housing, disappointments in the British education system they had grown up to respect, and above all, racism in overt and hidden forms. They also encountered changes in the relationships within their own communities: some young women had finally rebelled against their parents, unable to live with the overprotectiveness of their families, especially when comparing their own lives to those of their class-mates at school. As one woman put it:

I went through stages of wishing I was white so I could have more freedom to socialise with my friends, being Asian seemed to me somehow seen as undesirable ... I could never live at home again. My mother has the ability of reducing me to an incontinent child. She hates my lifestyle and the fact that I am independent.'

Another woman found that her husband's increasing financial control over her in this country completely isolated her: *Man get money mad when they come here.*

This invisible oppression, suggests another woman, is widespread: *Women get battered week, after week, for trivial reasons. Some husbands are alcoholics, but others do it sober. It happens with young and middle aged couples, but the women are too scared to divorce. They are frightened of the outside world, the courts and lawyers, the documents they probably won't understand, and most of all they fear their family.*

The families will feud and look down on her. She'll lose her friends. She'll have nowhere to go. If she's illiterate, she'll find more problems. So to avoid all this hassle, she will stay with her husband. That way she nor her parents will face any shame.

Others however, found their families and communities the only refuge from English racism: *Still today, we think who don't speak English and mix well - what sort of treatment they get from this racist society and police. We people just want to work hard, earn money and look after family here, as well as back home.*

These excerpts should give an idea of the variety of experiences in *Breaking the Silence*: but there is one strong theme throughout most of the women have found some way of resolving their individual dilemmas, whether it is through Western 'independence', links with an extended family, or re-discovering India: all of them, however are acutely conscious of the problems for Asian women in this country.

Asian Centre opens

A social event with Indian food and drink was the high point of Hackney Asian Centre's open week at the end of November. During the week the Centre, situated in Dalston Lane, close to Dalston Junction station, opened its door to the general public. Members of the staff showed visitors around and chatted to them over cups of coffee.

The Asian Centre is a 3 storey building. A comfortably furnished basement houses a Day Centre for the elderly and a library of books and reading materials. A pensioners' Luncheon Club is held here regularly. The ground floor is the reception area. Copies of "Asian Times" are on view alongside the Centre's own publication, "Asian Voice in Hackney". It is produced on the premises by one person, Ranjit. A display of colour photographs shows people taking part in the activities at the Centre -- the youth



club, girls' group and bhagra dancing classes. Regular TOPS courses are organised by the EMCT Project. These are held in the Training Workshop on the first floor, which is furnished with modern office equipment.

Women's and girls' activities take place on the second floor, next to the Youth Club. Anita the Women's Officer, has been employed at the Centre for just three months. Although the activities for girls have only recently got started the response so far has been enthusiastic.

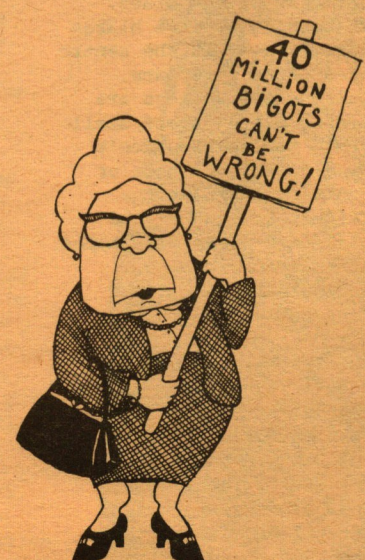
"The girls love coming here" said Anita. "At first we had traditional activities like sewing, but then the girls began playing pool. They enjoy it very much, and are now gaining the confidence to challenge the boys to a game of pool - and beat them!" The girls also started a bhagra dancing group - a new departure since usually only the men dance. Women's activities are new but very popular already.

WONDER WOMAN CARTOONIST CATH



Congrats to sometime HPP cartoonist, writer and pasteur-up extraordinaire Cath Jackson on the publication of her book *Wonder Wimbin*. Cath was responsible for the merry strip *Petty Bureau* which decorated our back page for several rib-tickling years. Since then she has moved on to greater things: *City Limits*, *Nursing Times*, *Trouble and Strife*... Now her first book! Published at a mere £2.95 it's a snip for a late Christmas pressie, a birthday or just a little something to cheer yourself up in these dark days.

Published by Battle Axe Books, *Wonder Wimbin: Everyday Stories of Feminist Folk*, is available from bookshops.



BEARING THE BURDEN

Women will be the ones to suffer most from the effects that rate-capping will have on local government spending. This is the inescapable conclusion of a report issued recently by the Local Government Campaign Unit - Bearing the Burden - and a depressing report it is too.

Women are the major users and providers of services, so it is they who are hit hardest by cuts. When local services fail, it is on women that the responsibility for taking on the care of children, the old and the sick falls. Such burdens naturally limit them in the jobs they can take on.

JOB IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Local government is one of the largest employers of women. Any cuts will therefore hit women, but women workers are particularly vulnerable because of the work that they do. Women are mostly employed in the low-paid, lower status jobs, but above all they form the vast majority of part-time workers. Conditions of service are therefore poor. In Sheffield, for instance, 98% of salaried part-timers and about 98% of the weekly paid part-timers are women. The fact that most of these women have dependents limits them to jobs

where they can take time off when children are sick or during the holidays.

Cuts will, obviously mean redundancy and the loss of jobs. But they will also, says the report, work against women in more subtle ways. There will be reductions in hours, worsening working conditions, lower pay and an increase in pressure from the growing workloads. Privatisation is an obvious case. In Dudley the school cleaning service has been privatised, the number of staff employed has been cut and the hours worked reduced by 40%.

VOLUNTEERS

Another, more insidious effect, says the report's author, Barbara Webster, is that women may be recruited on an unpaid basis to help out after cuts. Meals on wheels, for example, relies heavily on volunteers, mainly women. Or the help of parents may be enlisted in schools to make up for inadequate staffing. One primary school in Bristol boasted of having 51 parents helping each week - all of them mothers.

"When women are used as a substitute for rather than a supplement to paid staff, it amounts to the exploitation of women and can remove the freedom to choose to take up paid employment", she says.

Cuts also have an indirect impact on women's lives since overwhelmingly it is women who care for the old, ill or children. More than a fifth of those women over 40 look after someone else. Reductions in services means less help for these carers, often placing them under intense strain.

Women are likely to go on suffering as they and their needs are under-represented. Few of them are in senior or policy-making roles in local authorities. And few are councillors. In 1982, apparently, a mere 18% of councillors were women.

The leaflet's conclusion is grim: the councils doing most are those about to be ratecapped, by a government committed to policies which will deny women their right to work and will use them as an unpaid alternative to the welfare state. The leaflet offers no solutions, it merely states the situation, and leaves us to decide what action should be taken.

ELDERLY

The majority of people who use support services for the elderly are women - around 75% - and as the level of provision drops, these elderly people will be less likely to find a place in a home, get home help or get meals on wheels.

'Bearing the burden' is issued by the Local Government Campaign Unit, Mary Ward House, 5/7 Tavistock Place, London WC1, price £1.

The Golden Stool of Ashanti

Tuesday evening at The Golden Stool of Ashanti (named after that article in Ghanaian Ashanti regalia) will certainly not find you fighting for a seat. However, the lack of fellow diners was amply compensated for by the interesting indigenous artefacts at this African restaurant. Bamboo covered walls, paintings of Ghanaian village life, folklore and customs, a variety of implements and African music all create a refreshingly different atmosphere for one who is used to the flock wallpaper of Indian restaurants.

The menu is varied and imaginative but several dishes were 'off' that evening. The choice of starters was somewhat disappointing (including prawn cocktail and smoked mackerel) but we were very pleased with our sweetcorn and and coconut and lamb kebab, which was delicately spiced and delicious.

INTERESTING

Choosing a main course proved more of a problem as so many of the dishes were unfamiliar and interesting. The first decision is whether to concentrate on the carnivorous, vegetarian or fish section of the menu, all of which offer a good choice. Vegetarian dishes which particularly tempted me were Red-Red (Black-eyed beans in savoury red sauce served with crisp plantain fingers) and Pavlava Sauce (Spinach and mixed vegetables in palm nut sauce). Although I don't much like fish, Fish Gravy (Snapper in savoury gravy laced with rum) did sound pretty good.

Being inveterate carnivores, though, we finally

ordered Chicken Special and Groundnut Stew, and from the essentially root-orientated vegetable selection, fried plantain. The chicken was generous in quantity, in a highly spiced thick sauce and served with rice and salad. However, I was most impressed by the Groundnut Stew, which was a rich and creamy groundnut (Peanut) sauce with pieces of fish and meat. These dishes were both substantial enough to prevent us attempting one of interesting sweets available.

The Golden Stool of Ashanti is open from 7.30 to 11pm Monday to Saturday (closed on Wednesday). Although you are unlikely to encounter problems on weekdays, they prefer bookings as all food is freshly prepared.

PRICES

Prices are somewhat higher than an average Indian or Chinese restaurant (a 2-course meal with beer for two will cost around £14), but there are only about three African restaurants in London and in my opinion the 'difference' is worth paying for.

AUTHENTIC

Imaginative surroundings, pleasant and efficient service and well-cooked, largely authentic food are all features that should put The Golden Stool of Ashanti on everybody's list of 'places to eat in Hackney.'

The Golden Stool of Ashanti African Restaurant: 133 Well Street, Hackney E9.

Tel: 01-533 2753

Pub of the Month

The Cricketers

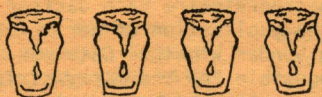
NORTHWOLD ROAD, N16

The Cricketers has no pretensions to being a wine bar, a cocktail bar or a real ale palace. It's just an honest-to-goodness local, with a cosy and welcoming atmosphere.

The first thing that strikes you as you walk in is the womb-like semi darkness of the place. An open (gas) fire blazes merrily away in the centre of a stone fireplace. Quiet conversations are taking place across small round tables. You won't find flashing lights or thumping music at the Cricketers, though the bar staff often play tapes of their own choice, variable but usually listenable ones.

The Cricketers is very much a regulars' pub. The cognoscenti are the ones leaning across the bar chatting to the friendly bar staff. The regulars' dogs are a feature in themselves. Two or three can be seen sprawling

across the carpet, in the manner of the hounds in a medieval banqueting hall. They provide entertainment now and then by noisily savaging packets of crisps or touring the pub to beg for peanuts. The smallest one of all yaps at the heels of people leaving the pub - never when they're coming in!



The relaxed nature of the place is such that no-one objects or makes a fuss about these canine capers.

As to drink, the Cricketers is a Watney Combe Reid pub, serving the popular Yorkshire bitter at 82p a pint. They have recently brought back the Combe bitter, on special offer at 60p. The Yorkshire found favour with HPP's tasting

team. They thought it was 'flavoursome', while the Combe was smoother and fruitier - a refreshing pint. Carlsberg and Fosters lager are on offer too.

The decor, though not easy to make out given the dim lighting, is vaguely Victorian, but not self-consciously 'period'. There are assorted paintings, paintings of famous cricketers of the past.

Not the sort of place you go to see or be seen in, the Cricketers is more the sort of place for ensconcing yourself in a corner for a drink and a chat within range of the glow of the fire on a cold winter evening.



Making a splash

Life, if not wonderful, might be improving a little in Shoreditch. The local residents, if they are madly energetic, can drive themselves to fitness in the new trim gym. Or, if they prefer to indolent life, they can disport themselves in the tropic delights of the Britannia leisure pool.

The Britannia leisure centre's pool features a wavemaking machine, palm trees and other tropical plants and - to quote the council press release - 'an oasis of blue water'.

The pool is designed to provide general fun, with a slide, teaching pool and paddling area. If this all seems too much like an excess of energy, you can lounge in the pool-side cafeteria or, for total indulgence, you can try the sauna, sunbeds or eight foot jacuzzi.

Meanwhile, at the Hagger-

ston Pool in Whiston Road, you can sweat yourself into fitness. The 'Trim gym' has exercise cycles, a jogging machine, and swimming trainer and weight training machines.



Disability Day

People with a disability who live in Hackney are planning a campaign day with the council to defend and improve services threatened by government cuts.

The date is Thursday, 21 March, at Stoke Newington Town Hall from 10am to 6pm. If you or a group you know of think you should be involved contact Jonathan Tipler Tel: 986 3266 x 209.

What's On

THEATRE

The Little Angel Marionette Theatre
14 Dagmar Passage, Cross Street, Islington NI.

Rapunzel: a traditional string puppet production of this rich and rewarding folk tale.
Saturdays and Sundays, 3 p.m.
Feb 9th/10th, 16th/17th, 23rd/24th.

Admission: Adults £2.50
Children £1.75

Book by phone 01 226 1787.

Shows for the 3-6 year olds
Saturday mornings at 11a.m.

PICCOLO PUPPET THEATRE presents
BOOLA BEAR: the story of a polar bear who hated the cold.
Feb. 2nd and 9th.

SNITCHITY TITCH: meets a Dodo who has a magic safe.
Feb. 16th and 23rd.

SNITCH ON SAFARI in which Snitch meets a greedy snake.
Mar 2nd, 9th and 16th.
Admission: Adults £2.00
Children £1.00

Book by phone 01 22 6 1787.

CINEMA

RIO CINEMA
107 Kingsland High Street
E8 254 6677

Fri 8 - Wed 13: Metropolis 9pm
Fri 8-Sun 10: You only live once 7.30pm
Mon 11-Wed 13: Hangmen also die 6.45pm
Lates: Rumblefish & Violent Streets (Sat), A star is born (Sun), Field diary & Hamsin (Thurs 14)

Jackie's story

'Jackie's story' is an amazingly honest and direct book. It is one girl's own account of her life during her teenage years. It starts with her playing truant when she goes to secondary school which she hates - she can see no point in it, does not enjoy it and feels a complete outsider. Truancy is combined with family troubles, she cannot cope, and she works her way down through the welfare agencies, disregarding one warning after another, until she is taken into care.

Eventually however the story ends on a much more encouraging note. Jackie has managed to come through her experiences, is coping better with herself and can see some kind of future.

There is much in the book

that disturbs - the seeming inevitability of Jackie's downward slide; the lack of any real communication between the welfare services and Jackie; the destructive influence of her family. But the book is most memorable because Jackie's recollection of events is so clear and her narrative is so direct that the reader shares her experiences and gains an insight into why it all happened. This is a book which many teachers and workers in social services should find of interest.

The author's identity is secret. The manuscript was sent to Centerprise anonymously and it so impressed the workers there that it was decided to print it. Copies can be bought from Centerprise at £2.85

CHATS PALACE

HOMERTON COMMUNITY CENTRE

42 BROOKSEY'S WALK E.9. 986 6714

Fri 8th: Islington and Hackney Amnesty International 8pm
Benefit with Banzai Washout, Primitive Speech and comper Steve Murray
£1 / 75p unwaged

Sat 9th: Pyramid Arts present Ancient Britons plus 8pm
Support

Fri 15th: Over 50's St. Valentines Ball 8pm
50p

Sat 16th: St. Valentine's Juke Joint with Cajun Blues, 8pm
Balham Alligators, Hackney Marsh Swamp Music and Homerton Crocodiles
£2.50/£1 unwaged

Fri 22nd: The Graeae Theatre Company present and "Frankenstein"
Sat 23rd: £2.50/£1 unwaged 8pm

MUSIC

CROWN & CASTLE
600 Kingsland Road, E8
254 3678

Sat 9 Feb: Cabaret

Thurs 14: Love Squad

Fri 15: Jack Monck - original songs and improvisations. 9pm - 12pm with late bar, £1/75p unwaged

Sat 16: Cabaret

Thurs 21: Dynamics

Fri 22: Jack Monck

Sat 23/Sun 24: Cabaret

Thurs 28: Artificial international

COURSES

COURSES FOR GOVERNORS OF ILEA SCHOOLS:
Secondary school governors; startign 26th Feb.

Primary school governors; starting 6th March 1985.

Contact Susan Smyth, Training Unit, the City Lit, Stukely Street, Drury Lane, WC2B 5 LJ. Tel: 405 0503.

NORTH LONDON EDUCATION PROJECT
The Basement, 16 Nevill Rd
Stoke Newington 241 2264

Help with reading, writing and maths ** advice on college courses * art, cookery, politics, etc
Ring or call between 10--5, Monday to Friday and speak to Valerie or Martin

Lesbians against pit closures fund raise to support the striking mining communities. For details of activities and meetings contact Nicola 274 4000 x 200.

Four more members wanted for newly formed squatters' group in south Hackney and Shoreditch. Contact A 'n' N, 23 Crofts House, Teale Street Shoreditch, E2.

Mental health help

City and Hackney Association For Mental Health have recently moved to 345 Mare Street, E8 (next to Marks and Spencers).

CHAMH is a local free voluntary mental health association. It provides an advice and information service for anyone feeling depressed, vulnerable or under stress. It can put you in touch with other voluntary groups, self help groups and advise you on the services available from both health and social services.

They can also advise on more practical problems such as welfare rights, legal rights, complaints and procedures etc.

Anyone wishing to visit the office should write to Linda Mitchell at the above address or ring 01-985 4239/533 0822.

OTHER EVENTS

Fri 8th Feb: OAKDALE WOMENS SUPPORT GROUP is having a benefit at Centerprise, 8-11.

Sat Feb 9th: Pensioners against the cuts. Talent contest at Stoke Newington Town Hall in the afternoon.

Thurs 14th Feb: Meda Resources Open Forum at Stamford Hill Library, Stamford Hill N.16. 7.30 p.m.

Fri Feb. 15th: Hackney 28 campaign Public Meeting -- why Black people must oppose Rate-Capping; speakers Vidya Anand, Lester Lewis, Andrew Puddephat or Hilda Kean.

Sat 16th Feb. Anti Rate- Capping Cabaret at the Wally Foster Community Centre

Wed 20th Feb: Public Meeting HEMA -- opposing Rate- Capping.

Thurs 28th Feb: Anti Rate-- Capping Cabaret -- Womens' Event- Stoke Newington Town Hall.

2nd March: Cavalcade organised by Save Hackney Campaign.

6th March: TUC day of action against Rate-Capping.

JENAKO

FORMED three years ago by members of Orchestre Jazira, the Jenako African Arts Centre at 49 Balls Pond Road, N1, has turned Dalston Junction into a gathering place for all kinds of musicians.

The centre provides rehearsal space for local bands at weekends and runs Music & Dance workshops throughout the week, starting from £1/£2 per session. Ring 249 5990 for details.

NOT AN ADVERTISEMENT

CANAL EXHIBIT

Local schoolchildren have produced the materials for an exhibition showing the transformation of the Regent's Canal into a thriving community asset.

Words, drawings and pictures tell the story of the rescue organised by local community groups, British Waterways Board, the council and the GLC. The tow path has been opened to the public and several of the basins have been revived besides improvements to the canalside.

There are still changes that need to be made, and the children set these out. The exhibition was funded by the GLC under the Canal Way Project. It can be seen until 18 February at the Rose Lipman Library; 20 Feb - 11 March at Goldsmith Row Library; 13 March - 2 April at the Parkside Library, Victoria Park Road.

Ratecapping competition for kids

The council is organising a painting competition for children on what Hackney would be like if ratecapping goes ahead.

Library Services is responsible for organising the competition, which is open to individuals, schools and other groups in three age groups: under 6, 7 to 11, and 12 to 16. All apintings should be taken to any Hackney library by 8 March.

Incentive to all entrants is a free bumper fun pack and an exhibitin of their work later in March.

AN EFFECTIVE CO-ORDINATOR

Dennis Wood, our Chief Executive and Town Clerk, retires in the Spring after 400 years' service.

The man or woman who replaces him will take on one of the most demanding roles in local government. Hackney noisily claims to be the most deprived borough in the country and the Council is committed to improving the living and working conditions of its councillors and senior officers.

One of the areas where you can influence change is by developing a positively corporate approach to the analysis, observation and review of policy objectives. The Council's Management Team plays a central role in this process.

This skilled team will be under your direct leadership and we will expect your key role within the team to involve effective bureaucracy and buckpassing.

A CREDIBLE ADVOCATE

Crucial aspects of the role will be your responsibility for promoting Hackney's stance against ratecapping and the growing encroachment of central government on local democracy.

Consequently, we place high on our list of requirements an understanding of local authority procedure, a knowledge of Patrick Jenkin's home phone number for clandestine negotiations which we're not going to conduct, a paid-up Labour Party card, and a commitment to implementation of our policies, such as they are.

But although this lot's important, there's all sorts of other exciting things for our Chief Exec. to do.

HOW

DO WE DEFINE
WHAT WE'RE
LOOKING FOR
IN OUR NEW
CHIEF
EXECUTIVE?

A CREATIVE INNOVATOR

Whilst policy initiatives obviously rest with the unelected officers you will contribute to an occasionally active dialogue with elected Members, whom you will blind with meaningless technicalities.

We don't really know what kind of experience you should have had, but it'd be nice if you've had sufficient management experience to make sure you are completely out of touch with reality.

Salary £32,112 - £33,642 exclusive of London Weighting and travelling allowance, luncheon vouchers, car, house, chauffeur, servants, holidays, slap-up feeds, etc.

Job share applications will be welcomed with a partner or two.

You can obtain an application form, job description and detailed particulars by writing to John Penney, Head of Personnel Services, Town Hall, Mare Street, E8 1EA or by telephoning 01-986 3123 ext.207/211 during office hours or 01-986 5131 (24-hour telephone answering service). Please quote reference number X090/G.

If you feel you would welcome more information after looking at the detailed particulars, you can contact Dennis Wood, on 01-985 2488 between 5 p.m. and 6 p.m.

Application Forms to be returned by 5th February 1985. We shall be shortlisting on Thursday 7th February, and the Two-Day Selection Procedure will take place on the 21st and 22nd February 1985.

AN AGENT OF CHANGE

In recent years, we have begun to introduce substantial changes both in the nature of our services and in the way we deliver them to the community. One of our key objectives is to ensure that they ignore the needs of our local community but we cover this up with lots of nice-sounding waffle.

We will be looking to you to develop and accelerate that process by lecturing the Directors and the elected Members on a number of important and sensitive issues, including whatever takes your fancy.



HACKNEY COUNCIL
Working for local people

Thanks to HCA!

HACKNEY echo

Thursday, December 6, 1984.

The first weekly newspaper to be delivered FREE to over 57,000 households in Hackney.

EXPRESS
EARLY TILL LATE
981 1234
GLOBAL
GASES
HEATERS FROM £29.95
Choose from 23 models

Clock
gets
market

Delivered FREE to over 57,000 households in Hackney. That's the tempting prospect for advertisers in the Hackney Gazette's latest stablemate, the freesheet Hackney Echo. But how accurate is their claim? If a random sample of addresses in Clapton, Stoke Newington, Stamford Hill and Shoreditch, only two out of six people said they had ever seen a copy. And only one address gets it every week. So the distribution would seem to be a lot less than the 57,000 they're promising their advertisers, since that would imply covering at least three-quarters of the borough.

The launch of a freesheet by the Hackney Gazette is an example of the new thinking

in the newspaper trade.

Freesheets are here to stay the argument goes. They don't compete directly with the paid-for papers, but people do read them, at least for a few minutes, and the advertisers seem to be queuing up to buy space in them. So why not cash in on the fact that you have a typesetting and advertising department which can do all the work on getting the ads ready for press, cobble together press releases to make some news shorts and advertising features around them, hire cheap labour schemes to distribute them. Your publishing operation is quids in, and the overheads of your paid-for paper are reduced.

Why is there no such thing as a radical freesheet? The failure of the Islington News, which was such a bright idea, with the loss of several thousands of ratepayers money would seem to knock that on the head. The big advertisers simply don't like the idea of their copy appearing with the publicity for left causes and political news. It's much better, if you're a publisher, to give them what they want, a bland, boring, forgettable job, which can be used to line the rubbish bin within ten minutes of arriving through the door. Viva the real alternative! Viva HPP! (Well, we had to put in a bit about ourselves somewhere!)

Task Force Invasion

The new year began with the news that the government is planning to set up five new Civil Service task forces to help tackle the problems of dereliction, unemployment and social disadvantage in England's most deprived inner city areas - Hackney, of course, being one.

At first sight, more funds being put into the borough seems to have much to recommend it - it is, after all, what we need. Serious doubts have, however been voiced by both the council and by local community associations.

Tony Millwood, speaking after a fact-finding visit to Merseyside where a similar task force was put into operation after the 1981 Toxteth riots, considered that it would provide no real help for inner cities.

The problem is that the task forces are intended to draw together officials from

the Departments of the Environment, Transport, Trade and Industry, Employment the DHSS, MSC and the Home Office - a daunting task. Tony Millwood found that in Merseyside, far from speeding up the government's response to the problems, the task force had done

RED TAPE

nothing but increase the red tape.

Since 1981 Merseyside has apparently lost £80m in government grants, while the task force has given no financial help, just added to the layers of bureaucracy, delaying the approval for new projects.

Another fear is that the approach of the task force may be like a development corporation's, such as has been used in the Docklands. Here public money is used to facilitate private enterprise. For instance, an old factory site might be bought with

public money, cleared, flattened and landscaped, then handed over to a private developer.

An even more serious concern is that this is yet another way in which this government is trying to take over control at local levels and undermine even further the power of local democracy. Tony Millwood pointed out that the task force, instead of establishing co-operation between government and the council as envisaged in the original partnership scheme, gives central government even greater powers to intervene directly and over-ride the council's priorities.

The timing of the scheme is, of course, linked to the issue of rate-capping. The money being promised will be held up as a tempting carrot. Details of the new proposals are expected in March: local groups will be as anxious as the council to see what they contain.

No HPP... No Comment

Do you feel strongly about anything that goes on in Hackney? Have you had enough of being fed half-digested information through our local paper and council bulletins, in articles which never get to the bottom of anything? Would you like a chance to make the news yourself, by getting involved with Hackney People's Press? If you agree with any of this, could spare an enjoyable few hours a month to

- write about what people are doing in Hackney
- sell papers in your area
- get local support in the form of advertising
- learn production skills to put the paper together once a month
- take photographs

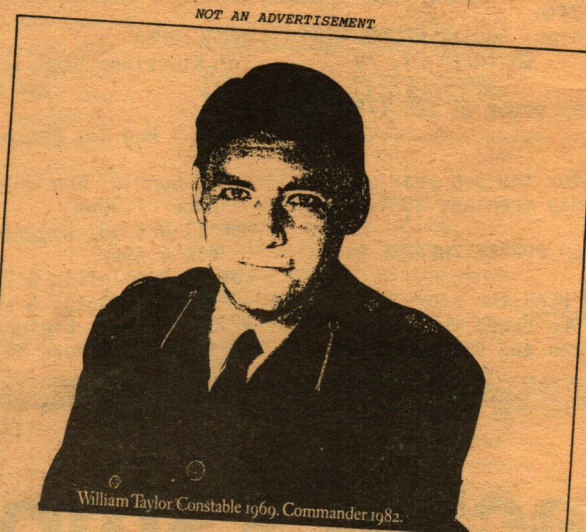
then come along to our next editorial meeting. The paper is run on an equal basis by whoever is prepared to put the time and work into it - no one gets paid for anything, but everyone chooses what they want to do. HPP has survived in this way since 1973 - but we are always looking for more people to get involved. The next editorial meeting is on Wednesday 20th February 1985 at 7.30 p.m. at Centerprise - just go in and ask for Hackney People's Press.

Taylor heads Sweeney

Commander Bill Taylor, the bright-eyed golden-boy of New Scotland Yard featured in national papers across the land, has left his former job as top dog at Stoke Newington police station to take over the Flying Squad.

He is being replaced by a Commander Hunter, who spent an earlier part of his career in the Traffic Division.

Remember, you read of Bill Taylor's meteoric rise first in HPP. Above we reprint our response to the advertising campaign that promoted Commander Taylor as a career-model and inspiration to aspiring flat-feet across the land. Maybe they will make a TV program about him after all.



NOT AN ADVERTISEMENT

At 35, Bill Taylor landed one of those high profile posts they always told him about at Bramshill Police Staff College, Commander in the Met (that makes him one of Sir Kenneth's golden boys, he's really shooting for the top!).

He's now in charge of one of those rough and ready East End districts that give the Metropolitan Police such a reputation on picket lines up and down the country. If he plays his cards right, the BBC may start making adventure serials about his 'patch'. If he's not so careful, he may get some unwanted attention from left-wing documentary film- and trouble-makers.

Obviously long service has nothing to do with Bill's meteoric

rise to the heights. It takes exceptional qualities to get to the top.

The ability to manage and manipulate.

To cover-up tricky situations and act with discretion.

To take the kind of decisions that can profoundly affect people's lives, without a thought for their feelings.

Naturally, only the most tame minds make it - and having the kind of face that gets you noticed helps too.

If you're on the dole and feeling bored, think how much more fun you would have kicking the shit out of pickets and harassing working people.

If you join the Met, you too might have your picture in the papers by 1993.

SOCIAL SERVICES SPENDING

At a meeting on January 10th 1985, Hackney Council Social Services committee confirmed that almost £500,000 is to be given to community groups in Hackney over the coming year.

The main areas of allocation are as follows

- £121,700 for the Caribbean House Group's Centre in Shoreditch;
- £29,300 for the Pensioners Link organisation;
- £70,000 for the Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association;
- £30,500 for the Hackney African Association and £29,300 for the Salvation Army - the balance going to about thirty other organisations in the borough.

The HEADS Centre for black and ethnic minority elderly people in Rectory Road, is to receive a grant for £100,00 to undertake major improvements, including increased kitchen space and better amenities for the severely disabled.

Another £5,500 is to go to a Muslim Community Centre in Stoke Newington, for heating, food and equipment for its elderly members.

Both projects are being funded under Council programmes aimed at improving services for local black and ethnic minority elderly people.

Fair Deal for Gays and Lesbians

A series of measures aimed at giving gay men and lesbians fair and equal access to social services in Hackney has been adopted by the borough's Social Services Committee.

The measures include assurances that gays and lesbians would be welcomed as prospective adopters and foster parents, applicants being judged on their merits as care-givers - that more thought should be given to the needs of gay and lesbian elderly and disabled people and that gays and lesbians should be recruited 'in sufficient numbers to develop positive policies in the Social Services Department.

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